

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3605
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PDIP, PGOV, PO, IS, SP
SUBJ: ISRAEL'S RELATIONS WITH IBERIA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: JERUSALEM IS NOT OPTIMISTIC REGARDING
PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL OR FOR
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DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SPAIN. GESTURES ON THE PART
OF THESE NATIONS TOWARDS NORMALIZATION WITH ISRAEL ARE
SEEN BY THE GOI AS TACTICAL MANOUVERS DESIGNED TO WARN
THE ARABS AGAINST INTERFERENCE IN THE AZORES THE CANARIES
AND MADEIRA. END SUMMARY

2. PORTUGAL - NO CHANGE. JERUSALEM DOES NOT FORESEE

ANY CHANGE IN RELATIONS WITH LISBON. ISRAEL REMAINS SATISFIED WITH THE ACQUISITION OF NARMAL RELATIONS, WHICH REPRESENTS ONE OF THREE RECOGNITION VICTORIES ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT SINCE 1973, AND WILL NOT NOW PRESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A PORTUGESE AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL.

3. ISRAEL AND SPAIN. MADRID IS SEEN AS BEING HELD BACK FROM RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL BY ITS EXTENSIVE INTERESTS IN NORTH AFRICA; ITS NEED FOR ARAB CAPITAL TO EXPAND ITS SHIPBUILDING, ARMS, STEEL, AND AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRIES; AND ITS DEPENDENCE ON ARAB RATHER THAN EUROPEAN MARKETS TO ABSORB SPANISH PRODUCTS. JERUSALEM BELIEVES, NONETHELESS, THAT PROSPECTS FOR RELATIONS WITH SPAIN HAVE IMPROVED SOMEWHAT BY THE ACCESSION OF JUAN CARLOS. IT IS THOUGHT HERE THAT THE KING AND HIS TOP ADVISERS ARE PRO-ISRAEL AND WOULD LIKE TO USE RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL TO HELP EASE PART OF THE FRANCO PAST. THE PROBLEM THUS, IN ISRAELI VIEW, INVOLVES TIMING RATHER THAN PRINCIPLE. THE GOI LISTS THE FOLLOWING THREE FACTOS WHICH COULD CHANGE THE BALANCE IN FAVOR OF RECOGNITION:

A) INCREASED ARAB MEDDLING IN THE CANARIES;
B) PROGRESS ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE FRONT; OR
C) SPANISH ENTRY INTO THE EC WHICH WOULD PROVIDE PARTIAL SHIELD FROM THE ARABS BEHIND WHICH SPAIN COULD HIDE.

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4. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL ATTACHES LITTLE HOPE THAT IBERIA WILL ENDANGER ITS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THUS POLITICAL STABILITY BY JEOPARDIZING ITS ACCESS TO ARAB OIL AND MARKETS, THE GOI KEEPS ITS EARS ATTUNED TO THE REGION. IT IS ONE OF THE FEW AREAS NOT FUNDAMENTAL TO ISRAEL WHERE IMPROVEMENT IN BILATERAL RELATIONS IS AT LEAST A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION. LEWIS

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